

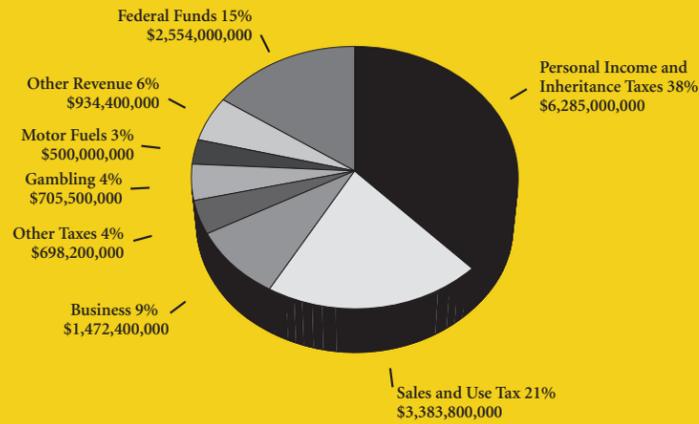
I am often asked questions on where the state derives its revenue and how it is spent. The chart below provides an overview of revenue and spending. I hope you find it informative in this regard.

*Hank*

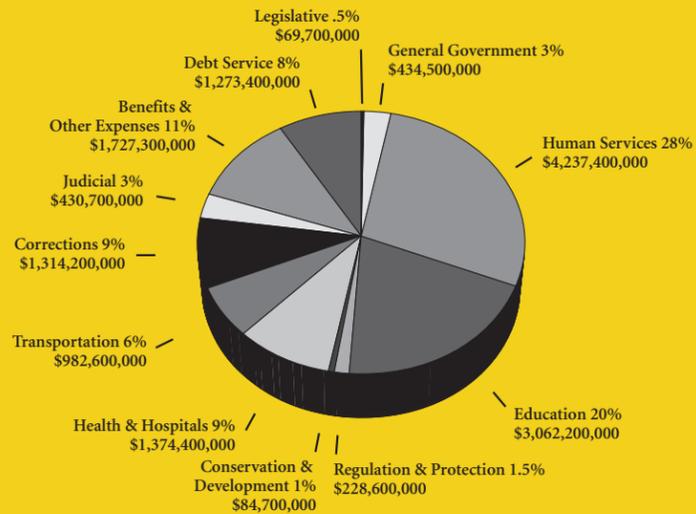
## BUDGET ENDING JUNE 30, 2006

The 2006 general fund and the special transportation fund spends \$15.2 billion.

### WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

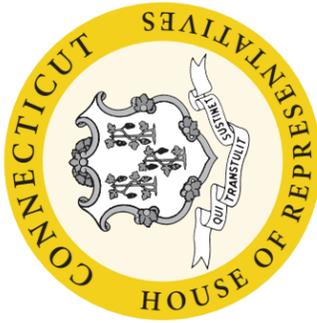


### WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?



\*In addition to an expected surplus, the difference between expenditures and revenues is due to tax refunds.

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State Representative  
**HANK BIELAWA**  
Proudly Serving the 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Bethel ★ Danbury ★ Redding



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# 2006 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



State Representative  
**HANK BIELAWA**  
Proudly Serving the 2<sup>nd</sup> District  
Bethel ★ Danbury ★ Redding



Representative Bielawa reviews pending legislation in the House Chamber during the 2006 Legislative Session.

## SENIORS

### Homecare Oversight

Public Act 06-187 will help protect the interests of senior citizens by requiring companies providing homemaker or companion services to obtain a certificate of registration from the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP). It also gives DCP authority to suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue the registration or take other disciplinary measures in response to violations of the bill.

Under the bill, beginning October 2006, these agencies must require new employees to undergo comprehensive background checks and take specified factors into account when making employment decisions based on the checks. Homecare agencies must also provide their clients with written individualized contracts or service plans that identify the services' scope, type, frequency, and duration. In addition, agencies that enter into a contract with a client's family must detail exact compensation.

### Property Tax Freeze

Public Act 06-176 allows municipalities to freeze the property taxes on homes owned by certain elderly people. To be eligible, the homeowner or his spouse must be age 70 or older and have lived in the state at least one year. The freeze continues for a surviving spouse who is at least age 62 when the homeowner dies. Homeowners must meet the same income limits that apply to the existing state-reimbursed "circuit breaker" program, which currently gives qualified homeowners age 65 or over a tax credit against the property taxes on their homes.

## VETERANS

### Tax Break

Public Act 06-153 excludes veterans' disability payments as eligible income used to determine property tax exemptions for Veterans. This initiative represents a way to recognize the many sacrifices made by Veterans.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### Prohibiting Underage Drinking On Private Property

Public Act 06-112 makes it illegal for an adult to knowingly permit minors to possess alcohol on his or her property or fail to make reasonable efforts to stop the possession of alcohol. The bill makes a first offense an infraction. Subsequent offenses will be subject to up to one year in prison, a fine of up to \$500, or both.

## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Reducing Hospital Infections

Public Act 06-142 will help reduce infections acquired in hospitals, which can lead to very serious medical problems. The legislation creates a committee to develop a mandatory reporting system for all healthcare associated infections. In addition, the report must be posted on the Department of Public Health website and be available to the public. Because this legislation establishes a detailed reporting system, it marks an excellent step toward reducing such infections.

### Living Wills

Public Act 06-195 updates state law regarding the use of living wills. The legislation addresses issues that allow for more effective utilization of living wills, including authorizing a person's chosen health care representative to make health care decisions if they are incapable of personally expressing those wishes.

## TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES

### \$2.3 Billion Package

Public Act 06-136 will provide for improvements to highways and mass transit in all corners of the state, allocating \$2.3 billion over a 10-year period. Projects to be funded in Western Connecticut include the completion of the engineering and design phase of widening Interstate 84 between Waterbury and Danbury. It also includes funding to upgrade rail cars on the Danbury rail line.

Other projects that will be funded include: the restoration commuter rail service between New Haven and Springfield, MA; the renovation of rail cars for use on Shore Line East, the New Haven-Springfield Line and Branch Lines and dredging of the state's commercial ports. It is important to note the bill does not include previous proposals for increasing the state gasoline tax or bringing back highway tolls. The package will be funded through revenue bonds.



## CONSUMER PROTECTION

### Prepaid Funeral Contracts

Public Act 06-87 will establish greater clarity in prepaid funeral contracts. The legislation requires pre-need funeral service contracts to be written and include certain provisions to help consumers. There have been problems involving the misappropriation of pre-need funds--in some instances due to bad business practice but some due to fraud. This bill provides protection for both consumers and funeral directors.

### Prohibiting "Phishing"

Public Act 06-50 outlaws email "phishing," which is typically a scam that uses email "spam" or pop-up messages to deceive people into disclosing their credit card numbers, bank account information, Social Security number, passwords, or other sensitive information. The new law will specifically prohibit the practice in Connecticut and make any violation a Class D felony.

### Protection Against Identity Theft

I cosponsored Public Act 06-60, which outlaws small scanners and reencoders that can be used to create fake credit cards. This is an ever increasing problem throughout the country and the bill is a positive step toward protecting our residents. Penalties for violating the new law include up to 10 years imprisonment, fines of up to \$10,000 or both.

## SPENDING AND TAXES

### 2006-2007 State Budget

There were several good points in the 2006-2007 budget package that was approved this year. These include:

- Providing a welcome tax break. The maximum property tax credit on the state income tax, which was scheduled to rise from \$350 to \$400, will instead be raised to \$500.
- Allocating \$190 million to the Rainy Day Fund. This fund, established in the wake of enacting the state income tax in the early 1990s, played a vital role in cushioning the impact on taxpayers when the state hit difficult economic times a decade later.
- To help promote business development, it repeals the 15 percent corporation tax credit surcharge in 2007 and offers tax credits for companies that hire displaced workers and create at least 50 new, full-time jobs.

### Home Weatherization Incentives

Public Act 06-187 exempts residential weatherization and energy efficiency products and energy efficient heating equipment from the sales tax for 13 months, from June 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007. The exemption applies to insulation, programmable thermostats, water heater blankets, window film, window and door weather strips, caulking, water heaters, gas furnaces, and windows that meet federal Energy Star standards and oil furnaces that are at least 85% efficient.

### Saving For Education

The state budget package also creates a deduction from the state income tax for contributions to the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET--the state-sponsored college savings plan). It will allow taxpayers to carry forward any unused deductions for five consecutive years as long as each deduction does not exceed the annual maximums, which are \$5,000 for single filers and \$10,000 for joint filers.



Dear Neighbor,

After serving four years in the General Assembly, I will be retiring at the end of my current term. It has been a privilege to represent you in Hartford and I thank you for your support during this time. I value the friendships and working relationships I have developed with the people in our community and plan to continue to live in the 2nd District.

*Hank*